St Mark's Church Gillingham

Living for Jesus.
Loving Gillingham.
Learning Together.

PARISH PROFILE

PARISH PROFILE | St Mark's Gillingham, Kent

If you have any queries or questions regarding this parish profile, please contact either the Archdeacon, Patrons, PCC representatives, and/or our websites for further information.

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Diocese

Rochester

MESSAGE FROM THE ARCHDEACON OF ROCHESTER

The Ven Andrew Wooding-Jones

I have been Archdeacon of Rochester since September 2018. I preached at St Mark's Gillingham on my first Sunday as Archdeacon and have visited regularly both in person and online during lockdowns. I really value my relationship with the people of St Mark's and am praying for the right person to be appointed as their new Vicar.

Inevitably there has been much excitement following the appointment of Saju Muthalaly, its previous Vicar, as Bishop of Loughborough. However, coming before the end of the Covid pandemic and in a church which is active and busy, the speed and surprise of his move has demonstrated how important the incumbent is in conducting an orchestra with many players, all serving in different ways with a variety of roles, gifts and aspirations. Whilst the church continues to gather, to worship and to serve during the interregnum, there is clearly a leadership role to be filled.

As you will read in the Profile, St Mark's has congregations meeting in two buildings, strong links into its parish supported by three SDF funded projects, links with the Chaplaincy at Medway University Campus, alongside a vibrant and busy church.

Traditionally St Mark's would have been an eclectic church, drawing people from across Medway and beyond. Today it continues to be a church which reflects its evangelical, charismatic heritage, but now much more rooted in the parish and its local context. Sunday services are still an important place of encounter and engagement with God, both in person and online.

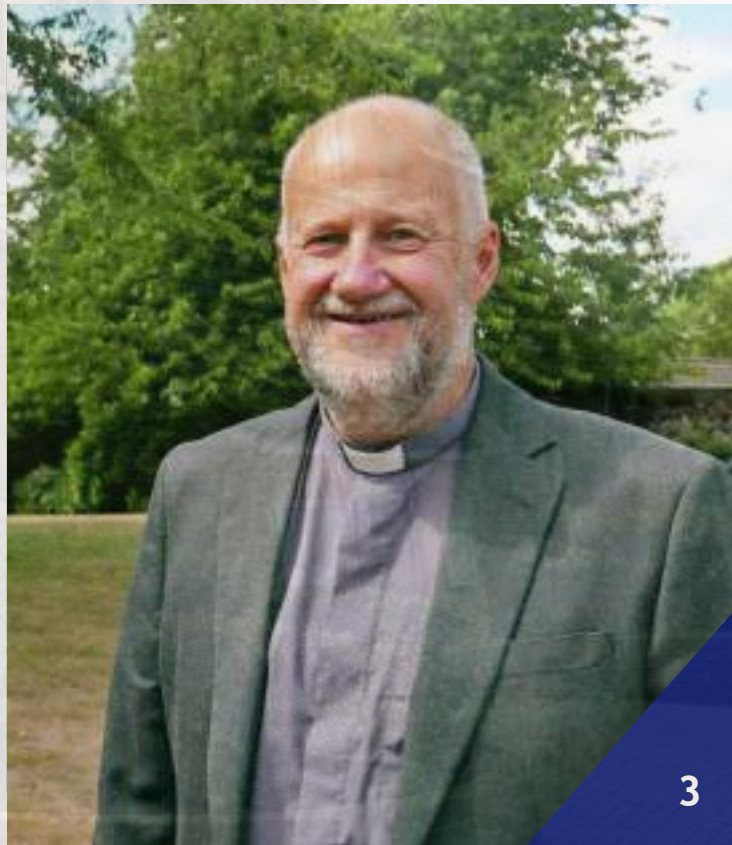
The new Vicar of St Mark's will be part of a very supportive church in a caring Deanery and Diocese. You will need to be comfortable leading and coordinating a complex organisation with good churchwardens, PCC and paid staff. St Mark's is multi-generational and reflects the ethnic and social mix of north Gillingham and St Mary's Island.

If you would value a conversation about this role, do make contact through Fiona Porter, my EA, by calling her on 07768 237328 or emailing fiona.porter@rochester.anglican.org.

Every blessing,

Andy Wooding-Jones
Archdeacon of Rochester

Diocese of Rochester
called together



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OVERVIEW

The vibrant parish of St Mark Gillingham is looking for a new vicar, following the resignation of the Rev. Saju Muthalaly. Saju has ably led us for a period of seven years and has now moved on to become the Suffragan Bishop of Loughborough.

The electoral roll represents the diversity of our congregations with many people contributing to the varied needs in the parish. Within the parish of St Mark's there is also a congregation that meets in the church school on St Mary's Island.

We are blessed with an active and committed lay ministry and under the leadership of the new vicar, our desire is to see St Mark's and St Mary's Island Churches grow both spiritually and numerically.

The Vicar of St Mark's has often been a training incumbent for curates and we would hope that continues.

In 2019 St Mark's was awarded a five-year Strategic Development Fund grant, creating three new job roles, based at, but not limited to, the parish. These posts of Community Missioner, Gospel Church Planter and Community Pastor (currently vacant) support major change projects and mission initiatives within the local community.

OUR VISION

We believe that what makes St Mark's "tick", and what we are called to do, is to ***Live for Jesus, Love Gillingham, and Learn Together***. These three principles mean that as a church:

- **Bible** - We acknowledge the authority of God's holy word, the bible and prioritise prayer.
- **Worship** - We are a worshipping community, where Jesus is the centre of our focus
- **Integrity** - We do everything with integrity, to the best of our ability and with joy.
- **Welcome** - We are a welcoming and safe place, a beacon of hope in the community.
- **Outward Looking** - We are outward looking and intentional about sharing the good news of Jesus both here and abroad.
- **Value Gillingham** - We prosper the local community by valuing the place and people of Gillingham.
- **Welcoming Diversity** - We are a diverse, yet unified, community who are committed to each other.
- **Discipleship** - We make and grow disciples who study the bible and are open to the Holy Spirit and His gifting.
- **Leadership** - We develop leadership through training, support and encouragement of all ages.

ABOUT THE PARISH

The parish is extensive and a map of the boundary is shown in *Appendix A.*

St Mark's is situated in the middle of Gillingham's main shopping area. Parish residents live mainly in small and medium-sized terraced houses (both owner occupied and rented) with council properties and sheltered housing for the elderly. The area is multicultural, has no predominant age bias but we do have an enormous number of families. A large part of the parish is designated as an Urban Priority Area (UPA). *Please see Appendix B for up-to-date sociological data on the parish provided by the Church Urban Fund.*

Within the parish is the new **Kitchener Barracks housing development**, whose plans include 193 new homes as well as retail units on the ground floor, and is currently in the final stages of completion.

Also situated in the parish, or very near, are:

- The Royal School of Military Engineering
- Medway Maritime Hospital
- Three universities with Medway campuses -
    - University of Kent,
    - University of Greenwich
    - Canterbury Christ Church University
    - Along with colleges associated with Mid-Kent College.

A number of schools (as well as many more in the immediate vicinity):

- Brompton Academy, a significant secondary school with around 1,360 pupils.
- St Mary's Island Church of England Voluntary Aided Primary School. It has a three form entry with up to 600 pupils, 60% of which come from the island. The school is often oversubscribed.
- Oasis Academy Skinner Street, Primary school, around 360 pupils.
- Brompton Westbrook Primary School, around 540 pupils.

Please see Appendix C for further details of educational provision in the area.

In the close vicinity of St Mark's there is a small but busy Mosque, a Hindu Sabha in a terraced house and a Spiritualist 'Church'. There are several Black Majority Pentecostal Churches meeting in various venues.

Medway Council offices are based in the Gun Wharf building on the banks of the River Medway, the former site of Chatham Royal Marine Barracks. We have good relationships with the ward councillors and with the MP for Gillingham. Medway police headquarters, opened ten years ago, and is situated just outside the parish boundary.

Although not actually within the parish, KRBS Priestfield Stadium is home to Gillingham Football Club, which was founded in 1893 and is the only Football League ground in Kent. Some members of St Mark's and St Mary's Island are keen supporters. The well-appointed Priestfield Stadium facilities have occasionally been used as a venue for united Christian events.

ABOUT THE PARISH

St Mary's Island is made up of some 1,500 properties, mainly houses, mixed with flats, where a pleasant and sought after residential area has been created in what was part of Chatham Dockyard. The development of the Island has been part of a large urban regeneration scheme, and building will continue during 2022. By 2023 it is expected that the Island will be 'fully developed'.

A broad mix of people live on the Island, many working in the professions such as banking, insurance, architecture, engineering, international aid agencies, teaching and nursing. Others based on the Island run their own small businesses. Some have come to retire and enjoy the Island's facilities and the coast and countryside of Kent, some are students at the nearby University of Kent Medway Campus. An hourly bus service operates to and from Chatham town centre for residents and secondary school children. By car there is easy access to the M25 via the Medway Tunnel, just 300 meters from the bridge onto the Island.

Gillingham Deanery

Gillingham is a diverse Deanery of eight parishes with twelve churches (including the Team Ministry of South Gillingham where the Rector is currently Area Dean). There is a wide range of churchmanship but good levels of cooperation. The Chapter meets monthly for mutual support, encouragement and prayer, with the aim of building trust and discovering where we are stronger together than when apart.

Ecumenical links

There is a monthly local Church leaders meeting *(the North Gillingham Church Leaders Fellowship*) which is well supported, mostly by evangelicals - two Baptist churches, URC, Methodist, Independent Pentecostal churches, Salvation Army, The Family Trust and sometimes the other Anglican leaders. The fellowship and trust amongst these leaders is strong. The Roman Catholic and the Black Majority Church leaders have not attended.

There is, in addition, '*Churches Together in Medway*' which covers a wider area and is again predominantly supported by evangelical leaders. They have a quarterly breakfast and have organised mission events and an annual celebration in Rochester Cathedral, around Halloween, which celebrates the saints of God. There is a strong focus on prayer and a broad vision for mission in the Medway Towns.

The Congregation

A wide variety of ages are represented. 20% of the adult congregation is under thirty. Another 50% are aged between 30 and 60 years. We have a very slight predominance of women over men and our membership includes a large number of people from various ethnic backgrounds.

Around 100 adults currently attend the Sunday morning service at St Mark's. Before the pandemic this was around 150 and we hope to see a gradual return of those who have felt unable to attend physically. The true average is higher than this because of significant attendance at the major Church services at Christmas, Easter and Remembrance Day. Approximately 25 children and young people meet separately in various groups, except for the first Sunday of the month when we have our All Age service. St Mark's has a strong ethos of lay leadership. There are currently 7 **Small Groups** which meet regularly for bible study, prayer, fellowship and mutual support. There are 164 on the electoral roll of St Mark's, making a combined total of 217 over both Churches.

Worship

Our worship is firmly rooted within the Anglican tradition and reflects the national charismatic evangelical style. There is strong lay involvement in leading worship. Robes have not normally been worn by clergy, except for occasional offices, such as weddings and funerals and the formal Remembrance Sunday service with civic dignitaries and a large number of HM Forces Personnel and the British Legion. This is a significant event with over 400, mostly Armed Forces personnel, attending following a short ceremony at the nearby Cenotaph.

Music worship is led by a number of musicians and generally has a contemporary style. A prayer ministry team is always available to pray with people after each service. We perform Baptisms and Thanksgivings for both congregation members and people living within the parish boundaries, these are integrated into our regular service structure.

ABOUT THE CHURCH | St Mark's

Worship

Bible Stream - A monthly gathering which provides in-depth teaching of the Bible with the opportunity to ask questions and discuss.

Messy Church - A monthly gathering for all ages based on creativity, hospitality and celebration, with crafts, stories, games, food and songs.

Gospel Nights - A night of unhindered worship and dance, often featuring guest musicians and speakers, which is usually attended by 100 people from our own and other church congregations.

SUNDAY	MORNING | 10.30am	AFTERNOON/EVENING
1st Sunday	All Age Service	
2nd Sunday	Service of the Word	Bible Stream | 6.30pm
3rd Sunday	Holy Communion	Messy Church | 2.30pm
4th Sunday	Service of the Word	Gospel Night | 6.30pm
5th Sunday	Service of the Word	

Pastoral Care and Discipleship

Home Groups meet regularly at a variety of times midweek, to suit their members. These groups are led by members of the congregation and are for teaching and pastoral support.

Prayer Trios are a groups of three people of the same sex, who meet weekly or fortnightly, online or in-person, to grow a deeper relationship with Jesus Christ.

The Pastoral Care Team was set up to reach out to the parish, sharing God's loving care. While we are all called to care for one another, this team consists of 10 lay members who are particularly gifted and called by God to provide pastoral care in a more focussed and proactive way.

Youth and Children

Our young people are a significant part of our church family. We value them as individuals and desire to see them live out their faith with confidence; using their unique gifts and abilities in all that God is calling them to.

On Sunday mornings there are two groups that cater for our children - the **GEMS** group is for ages 3-4, and the **PEBBLES** group is for ages 5-10. These groups meet in the Vicarage Hall during the main service in church. We currently have 18 children that regularly attend the children's groups.

On the first Sunday the whole church joins together for the **All Age Service**, where the young people are encouraged and supported to lead parts of the service including prayers, sung worship, readings and preaching.

SUNDAY	Morning	Afternoon	Evening
1st Sunday	All Age Service		SUMMIT
2nd Sunday	GEMS & PEBBLES		SUMMIT
3rd Sunday		Messy Church	SUMMIT
4th Sunday	GEMS & PEBBLES		SUMMIT
5th Sunday	GEMS & PEBBLES		SUMMIT

SUMMIT, our group for 11-17 year olds, meets on a Sunday evening under the direction of a lay leadership team. An average of 12 young people meet for fun together as well as a slot for Christian content and the opportunity for discussion relating to life at school/with friend groups. The team put on a range of activities including computer games, board games, pool, quizzes, wide games, sports nights in the Old Vicarage garden as well as trips to local attractions.

Outreach and Mission

We have adopted and are committed to the Church of England Five Marks of Mission:

- **TELL** - To proclaim the Good News of the Kingdom
- **TEACH** - to teach, baptise and nurture new believers
- **TEND** - To respond to human need by loving service
- **TRANSFORM** - To seek to transform unjust structures of society, to challenge violence of every kind and to pursue peace and reconciliation
- **TREASURE** - To strive to safeguard the integrity of creation and sustain and renew the life of the earth.

We feel that we have quite good social engagement with the town, and hope to be an open community that welcomes newcomers. Over the past decade we have been developing strategies to reach the people of our community. We encourage Church members to serve on a large number of outreach projects.

- **Open Church** - a fully open weekly drop-in session with refreshments, where anyone is welcome to enter the church for a chat, fellowship or private prayer.
- **St Mark's Pre-school** - registered and approved by Ofsted and runs in the Vicarage Hall each weekday during term-time. It is supported by a management committee made up of members nominated by PCC plus parent representatives.
- **Peace and Hope** - for vulnerable adults with learning difficulties and their carers. It is linked to the world-wide l'Arche Community.
- **Parent and Toddler Group** - this meets weekly during term time reaching approximately thirty five families that have little or no contact with a Church.
- **Residential Home Visits -** ministry to local Residential Homes is undertaken on an ecumenical basis with significant St Mark's involvement.
- **Dementia Cafe** - bi-monthly drop-in session providing a safe and supportive environment for those living with dementia, their carers and families to come along and share in light refreshments, conversations, information and activities in a relaxed and friendly atmosphere.
- **Cinema Club -** every school holiday we extend an open invitation to the local community to come and relax in church for an afternoon with a family film on the big screen and refreshments.
- **Holiday Club -** A free children's holiday club for ages 5-10 years. This provides sessions of games and activities as well as a free lunch to up to 15 children. Children that attend are from the local community, with many from outside of the church.

Outreach and Mission

Other opportunities for mission result from our involvement with partner organisations, or are run in conjunction with other Gillingham churches:

- **Medway Night Shelter**
- **The Family Trust** (working in local schools)
- **The Medway Foodbank** in Gillingham (due to reopen soon) operates from St Mark's Church and is open twice weekly as a food distribution centre.

During the year, we arrange a number of events to foster relationships with the community. Our Christmas Festival is a large celebratory event which the local community are invited to attend and is a good evangelistic opportunity.

The Mission Links Task Group (MLTG)

MLTG is a team of PCC and church members who actively support home and overseas mission. We support our mission partners with prayer, pastoral care, and finance as needed; the Church currently supports fourteen mission partners. It also encourages individuals to take part in short term mission projects. MLTG reports to the PCC and makes recommendations for PCC approval. We currently support our local night shelter, the annual Let Loose concert in Gillingham High Street, Family Trust who work in schools, a Wycliffe bible translator, an Engage (SIM) coordinator as well as supporting the bishop's charity and our patrons. We support TEARFUND and individuals working in France, UEA, China, India and Zimbabwe.

Universities

Lynne Martin is licensed by the Bishop as full-time Medway Campus Chaplain, responsible for the 8,000+ students attending the Medway campuses of University of Greenwich, University of Kent, and Canterbury Christ Church University. This role is fully funded by the Diocese and the three Universities. Lynne maintains a staff presence at St Mark's which is her support Church.

Schools

We have a close working relationship with the nearby schools - Oasis Skinner Street school uses the church for their services throughout the year and have invited us to run holiday clubs on their premises for their students, and have a good relationship with Brompton Westbrook where our Gospel Plant Leader leads a choir.

Outreach and Mission

Strategic Development Fund

St Mark's Gillingham was awarded a five-year grant in 2019 from the Church of England's new Strategic Development Fund (SDF). The purpose of this new fund is to enable parishes to expand their reach in ways they have not previously had the financial means to do so. The grant was enough to create three new, salaried job roles, which would be based at, but not limited to, St Mark's Gillingham:

Gospel Plant Leader - Mayowa Oyinloye, also known as MJPRAISE, is well-known in the community for her musical prowess and evangelising. As part of the SDF role she runs events including: *Let Loose!* summer concerts in Gillingham High Street, Gospel worship nights, Good Friday services, African Praise nights and New Year's Eve services. She also runs programmes such as community choirs, weekly gospel-busking sessions, STREET2STREET CAROLS, kid's mentoring sessions and choirs.

Community Pastor - Our previous community pastor, Karen Turnbull, stepped down in January 2022 and so the position is currently vacant but with the funding secured for the appointment of someone new to fill the role and continue the work. The work previously established by Karen included the setting up of a new worshipping community, Finding Faith, running a number of public activity sessions throughout the week, including Craft Club, Coffee & God (all of which were running online during the Covid-19 lockdown) and the Little Eden Project which revitalised the outdoor garden spaces outside St Mark's church and St Augustine's Church.

Community Missioner - Christine Cordle, is a former district nurse who has also previously worked for The Family Trust - bringing a wealth of children's and youth ministry experience to her new role. She oversees the work of the Gospel Plant Leader and the Community Pastor, engages with a wide range of local community groups and forms partnerships with local schools - even leading assemblies and workshops. She runs Messy Churches, Holidays Clubs and other brand new worshipping communities in Gillingham.

During the Pandemic

During the lockdowns of 2020 the **St Mark's** church services went online, initially using Zoom to allow various congregants to participate in the service remotely. Then following the loosening of restrictions the weekly service was then live streamed to facebook from the church building. While many have returned to church, we have continued to broadcast our services in this way, knowing that a number of the older congregation are still unable to return.

During the pandemic a small dedicated team prepared and broadcast daily morning reflections and evening prayers to provide encouragement and companionship when many of our congregation were isolated.

We have had our online services watched by people from the local towns, as well as reaching a wider audience both nationally and internationally. In the past year we have put out a staggering amount of digital content, with over 882 videos (including services, children's church, reflections, gospel nights and more) and have received over 30,000 engagements.

ABOUT THE CHURCH | St Mary's Island

This is a lay led church, headed by Matt Keeler, a CofE Licenced Lay Minister, and supported by Reader, Carolyn Facey. SMIC has been richly blessed by the ministry of our previous vicar and worked closely with him and his team as services have moved from the school hall to Zoom and currently to hybrid Hall + Zoom meetings in response to the ongoing pandemic.

This has transitioned from a Local Ecumenical Partnership into a 'daughter church' of St Mark's with its own District Church Council. SMIC church is based in the school hall, where members gather each Sunday morning for 11am services. SMIC's mission statement, **'creating spaces for our community to encounter Jesus',** expresses very well their objective as a group of Christian believers and outward looking focus.

The community spirit within the congregation is good. SMIC has seen a number of members go on to full-time ministerial training within the church. Members are financially faithful in covering the operating and mission costs of the Church, and willing to take out long-term standing orders as an expression of this commitment.

The Church has grown steadily since it was established 21 years ago, and has 53 members on the electoral roll. Although five families have moved to other parts of the country since 2019, membership has been maintained at about the same level thanks to new additions. SMIC is conscious of the importance of expanding the membership and, ideally, bringing in younger families and individuals that have the skills, time and commitment to grow the work of the church on the Island.

SMIC Congregation

SMIC's membership reflects the makeup of people on the Island, with 40-50 adults and 10-15 children attending the weekly services now that Covid-19 restrictions have eased. The median age is around 50, ranging from zero to 80+, with members from many walks of life and from different cultural backgrounds. Most members live on the Island and can walk to church or take a short car ride. We are also attracting visits by residents from the nearby, and recently opened, retirement home 'Atlas'. Ongoing building work in and around the Island should provide scope for further growth in the year ahead.

The music, led by guitar, drums, and piano would be characterised as evangelical and the services are generally informal.

ABOUT THE CHURCH | St Mary's Island

ST.MARY'S ISLAND CHURCH

Ongoing Activities:

- Post Covid-19 services are currently held both in-person and online, using Zoom for members unable or unwilling to join a group at present.
- Monthly online Zoom Prayer meetings on a Thursday morning.
- Congregation WhatsApp Group for prayer requests.
- Ladies' evenings once a month in the School hall on Friday evenings, attended by 10-15 ladies.
- Small groups meet at Starbucks and the local coffee shops for tea and cake.

Outreach Activities:

- Little Fishes - weekly mother and toddlers' group attended by around 35 parents and over 40 children
- In recent years the Church has entered a team for the annual Dragon Boat Race, a community-wide event held on the central basin between the Island and the mainland.
- Annual BBQ Lunch organised by our treasurer and his wife in their garden for members and friends, and ad-hoc BBQs organised by other members.
- Christmas Events: a number of community events, including a Father Christmas at the Community Centre, an open-air carol service, a painted stone treasure hunt, and a Christmas programme at Atlas Place retirement home.
- Activities at Rochester Cathedral, where Carolyn Facey helps other volunteers to cater for groups of up to 100 school children visiting the Cathedral to experience brass-rubbing etc.
- Running weekly services for children at the St Mary's Island school, and on special occasions.

Children's Activities:

- The church mouse, Malachi, attends services regularly, and has been active during the pandemic in helping to organize children's parties.
- Island Youth Club, The Castaways, for 11-14 year olds,
- Local Scouts Group for 15-17 year olds.

SMI School

The main facility on the Island is the primary school, recently expanded to accommodate over 600 three-eleven year olds, including nursery classes for 3-4 year olds. Several Church members have children attending the school. Matt Keeler has recently been appointed as Chair of Governors, working with five other Church-appointed Foundation Governors. The school is central to the life of the Island. Foundation Governors seek to provide input to the direction that it takes, particularly in care for its staff, and its relationship with the Church. Pre-pandemic the Church was closely involved with the school, for example, taking services for children in the school.Post-pandemic, the Church expects to see closer involvement between the congregation and the school, with visible and improved support for school staff and parents.

For a more in-depth look at St Mary's Island Church please see appendix F.

BUILDINGS

The Church

St Mark's Church was built in 1866. It has seating capacity for 350 plus a further 100 on big occasions. To help give greater freedom in worship, the interior was re-ordered in 1984. This included a dais, carpeting, chairs and the installation of a full-immersion baptistery. We currently use a digital projector and screen above the dais and cameras are installed for service broadcasting. We have a digital sound desk and truss mounted lighting. We have recently installed new toilets, including accessible ones. We are also at the design stage of installing a well needed new kitchen within the building.

The Old Vicarage Site

Situated some 500 metres from the Church itself, the site – consisting of the Old Vicarage, the Vicarage Hall, the New Vicarage, the Garden House and a grass open area - is a key resource.

The Vicarage was built in 1990, is situated at the rear of the Old Vicarage site surrounded by mature trees. It is very secluded and quiet, with its own private garden, and well maintained by the Diocese. It has four double bedrooms, a shower room, bathroom and two toilets, a living room, dining room, large study, utility room and kitchen. The total floor area measures 180 m2. It is well insulated. There is a brick built garage and a brick built shed at some distance from the house but still within the grounds. A wooden garden shed is also usefully provided by the back door.

Church

Vicarage

BUILDINGS

The Old Vicarage is the administrative centre of the parish with a parish office, a Vicar's office/study, meeting rooms, two kitchens and toilets. The building has been adapted for wheelchair use on the ground floor and is in use almost every day of the week by staff, homegroups, the youth group and occasionally non-church organisations. This former vicarage was purchased by the PCC in 1991. It was built in 1890 and has a floor area of 286 m2.

The Vicarage Hall, adjacent to the Old Vicarage, is in frequent use with our weekday Church Pre-school, the weekly Parent and Toddlers group, the Peace & Hope Group and other children's groups. Equipped with audio visual facilities, it is available for hire. This brick built building has undergone renovation and an extension, providing a wheelchair accessible toilet, porch, and storage area. It accommodates around 100 people. There is a good sized kitchen.

The Garden House has traditionally been the accommodation for the Associate Vicar or the Curate. This detached property built in 1968 comprises a lounge, dining room, kitchen, four bedrooms, a bathroom and two toilets. The floor area is 128 m2. There is a large south facing garden. The Medway Campus Chaplain is currently housed here.

The St Mary's Island School and Church has a small office in the school building and uses the school's well equipped modern hall, the kitchen, and classrooms for children's Sunday-school lessons. When this C of E Voluntary Aided school was planned and opened in 1999 it was intended that the school would be used as a Church from the start. The Hall was licensed for Anglican Worship in late 1999 when the school first opened.

Vicarage Hall

Garden House

Old Vicarage and Garden

St Mary's Island School

ADMINISTRATION | STAFF/TEAM

Administration

The day to day administrative and general office functions of the parish are coordinated by the Operations Manager/Vicar's PA and Office Administrator. Additionally we have a Digital Lead who oversees St Mark's website and social media. There is a separate administrator for St Mary's Island Church, who works in this office space once a week.

Staff/Team

Church Administrator and Operations Manager - Vicki Watson (part-time) (maternity cover)
Vicar's PA - Vicki Watson
Digital Lead - Hannah Whittaker (part-time)
Universities Chaplain - Lynne Martin
Community Missioner (SDF role) - Christine Curtis
Gospel Plant Leader (SDF role)- Mayowa Oyinloye
Community Pastor (SDF role) **-** vacant

Church Wardens - Karen Dyer and Seun Adigun
Treasurer - Glyn Allen
PCC Secretary - Vicky Allen
Reader Ministry - We currently have four readers, Canon Ernie Mann, Graham Davis, Matt Keeler and Carolyn Facey. Ernie and Graham are licensed by the Bishop to conduct funerals.
Pastoral Assistant - Jane Banner-Martin
Anna Friend (part of the Anna Chaplaincy team) - Pauline Jackson
Homegroups & Trios Coordinators - Valerick Flick & Dammy Oyinloye

St Mary's Island - Matt Keeler is the Focal Minister at the Island Church, assisted by Carolyn Facey.
St Mary's Island Administrator - Jonica Thomas (part-time)

SAFEGUARDING

As a parish we strive to create and maintain an environment that is safe for everyone that comes through our doors. Our Parish Safeguarding Officer heads this area, supported by Children and Youth and Vulnerable Adults Advocates.

We fully abide by the House of Bishops' ***Promoting a Safer Church - House of Bishop's policy statement***, which is based on five foundations and offers six overarching policy commitments as below:

- Promoting a safer environment and culture
- Safely recruiting and supporting all those with any responsibility related to children, young people and vulnerable adults within the Church
- Responding promptly to every safeguarding concern or allegation
- Caring pastorally for victims/survivors of abuse and other affected persons
- Caring pastorally for those who are the subject of concerns or allegations of abuse and other affected persons
- Responding to those that may pose a present risk to others

Gabriele Goddard - Parish Safeguarding Officer
Tel: 07941 731656
E-mail: ggoddard@stmarksgillingham.org

See Appendix G for Promoting a Safer Church - House of Bishop's policy statement.

GOVERNANCE

St Mark's PCC full complement is 21 members comprising: Vicar, two Churchwardens, 12 elected members, three Deanery Synod members, Diocesan Synod member and two representatives from St Mary's Island Church DCC. There are currently six unfilled positions, which we trust will be taken up at the next APCM in May 2022. PCC meetings take place monthly and are normally chaired by the Vicar.

The Standing Committee comprises the Vicar, Churchwardens, Treasurer, PCC Secretary and two elected members of the PCC. The committee meets as required between PCC meetings and brings recommendations to PCC on various matters, including those referred to it by the PCC. It has power to take decisions on behalf of the PCC when required.

Other committees or Task Groups are formed and meet as required to consider various aspects of church life. It is our intention that all members of the PCC sit on at least one of these groups and the clergy are members of each group by right. Task Groups report back to the PCC with recommendations following their considerations. Other church members can be co-opted to the groups as needed.

The current Task Groups are:

- Finance
- Human Resources
- Properties
- Mission Links Task Group
- Structures, Building and Fabrics
- Pre-school Management
- Covid Strategic Planning Team

St Mary's Island District Church Council operates with separate accounts and meetings under the leadership of the Vicar and the Focal Lay Minister. Meetings of the District Church Council are held six times a year, chaired by the Focal Lay Minister. The DCC makes decisions on all relevant aspects of Church life, such as services, finances, charitable donations, activities. It consists of key members of the congregation, including the church secretary, treasurer, safeguarding representative, assistant wardens and other members, elected by Church members for rotating 3-year, extendable, terms. The Vicar and, when in office, Associate Vicar/Curate, attend DCC meetings to stay in touch with SMIC members and to keep them informed on activities and developments at St Mark's. Matt Keeler and Carolyn Facey attend St Mark's PCC meetings to give the PCC insights into SMIC activities. Although the Annual Report is published and submitted to the Diocese of Rochester separately, it is incorporated with the St Mark's Annual Report submission to the Charity Commission.

FINANCES

The PCC's financial ethos is to encourage planned giving, through standing order, bank transfer, online giving, contactless card, or cash. Approximately 85% of General Fund income is from voluntary giving. Over the years we have been mightily blessed by God, who has always provided for our financial needs, often in unexpected ways. We have recently received a legacy, a proportion of which will be used to fund a new kitchen in the church building.

St Mark's annual budget is determined by the previous year's outturn, the amount of voluntary giving that we expect to receive, and the amount needed to sustain our various ministries. We give away for mission, 10% of the previous year's voluntary giving and are committed to pay the Diocese Indicative Offer in full.

It is PCC policy to aim to maintain a General Fund minimum balance on free reserves of £55,000 to smooth out any fluctuations in cash flow and to meet emergencies. For the year-end 2020 the net current asset was 31.9% of 2021 forecast expenditure and cash reserves were 22.4%

There has been a marked reduction in voluntary giving over the past two years of the pandemic and while we hope the level of giving will be restored when services attendance levels return to normal, there is no certainty when this will happen. There may be a reluctance on the part of some church members to return to worship in the church building in person for a number of reasons. Additionally, some members may have additional financial burdens resulting from Covid related causes, which could affect their level of giving.

In addition to the unrestricted General Fund, St Mark's has 19 other funds, which are either restricted or designated, with St Mary's Island Church funds being held in a separate account. St Mark's Pre-school has a turnover of over £100k/year. The total combined income and expenditure for the parish for 2020 was:
Income: £321.81k
Expenditure: £310.88k

The St Mary's Island Church finances are, for such a small group, relatively strong. We take in around £28,000 annually, of which £5,000 comes from Gift Aid. Around 80% of our income comes from Standing Orders. Expenses are, in normal times, £13,000 as our 'parish share' to the costs of running the Diocese, £4,000 to cover the costs of our paid Administrator, and £2,000 as a contribution to the school for electricity, heating and maintenance costs associated with our use of the school hall and premises. From the balance we give around £5,500, or 20%, in home and overseas missionary and charitable giving. At the end of 2021 we held £20,000 in our account, knowing that some further costs will need to be met in the first few months of 2022.

FINANCES

General Fund Income & Expenditure 2020 and 2021
(excluding transfers)

	2020			2021 (provisional)		
	St Mark's	St Mary's Island	Parish Total	St Mark's	St Mary's Island	Parish Total
INCOME						
Voluntary income	£125,705	£28,869	£154,574	£121,108	£26,973	£148,081
Other income	£3,4022	£5,522	£39,544	£18,202	£393	£18,595
Total	**£159,727**	**£34,391**	**£194,118**	**£139,310**	**£27,366**	**£166,676**
EXPENDITURE	£162,683	£29,025	£191,708	152,152	£26,598	£178,750
SURPLUS/DEFICIT	£-2,956	£5,366	£2,410	£-12,842	£768	£-12,074

See Appendix D for 2020 Annual Report and Accounts
See Appendix E for Statutory and Additional Reports - APCM 2021

WHO WE ARE LOOKING FOR

We are prayerfully seeking a gifted visionary leader committed to enhancing the ministry of both St Mark's and St Mary's Island churches in their desire to reach out into the community and beyond. Someone who:

- Aims for excellence in biblical teaching and is passionate about preaching and the importance of worship, prayer, and evangelism.
- Is a charismatic evangelical with experience of the workings of the Holy Spirit who will desire and encourage the use of spiritual gifts both individually and corporately.
- Has good pastoral skills and will love the people of St Mark's, St Mary's Island and the people of this parish, as evidenced in a commitment to minister spiritually and practically to all.
- Believes in teamwork, nurturing leadership teams and has a desire to enable, encourage and develop lay ministry.
- Is an encourager of gifts and talents who can spot potential, help develop and disciple people and raise up future leaders.
- Values and supports the young people within the church and prioritises the nurturing of children in the congregation and community.
- Has good communication and interpersonal skills and is able to relate to a wide cross-section of people and diversity within the local church, the local community, the Diocese, and other denominations.
- Will serve St Mary's Island School as a Governor (the Vicar is an ex-officio Foundation Governor) and ensure it continues to have a strong Christian ethos and support the Head Teacher in particular.
- Someone who has a heart and compassion for the poor, vulnerable and marginalised in society.
- Someone who accepts that God intended marriage to be for life, but that in certain situations marriage after divorce may be permitted.
- Someone who is affirming the unrestricted ministry of women at all levels of church life.
- Someone who is equally comfortable with the baptism of infants and/or adults by pouring and baptism by full immersion.

APPENDICES

Appendix A | *Parish Map*

Appendix B | *Church Urban Fund Parish Data*

Appendix C | Education Information

Education in Medway Congregation members have children at various schools within the parish and in other areas nearby, in Rainham, Chatham and Rochester. *Click here to see the Government website for full list of schools in the area.*

Preschool | St Mark's Preschool, on the Old Vicarage site, caters for children from 2 years old. Other provisions, such as full-day care, are available in the local area.

Primary Schools | There are a number of primary schools in the area, as well as the Church of England Primary School on St Mary's Island.

Secondary Schools | Medway still follows a selection procedure and, as a result, has a variety of grammar and non-selective schools, both single sex and mixed.

Private Schools | There are also private schools in the area catering for children from aged 3 years upwards, including the King's School in Rochester that offers reduced rates for clergy families. There is also a specialist music college in Rochester.

Appendix D | *2020 Annual Report and Accounts*

Appendix E | *Statutory and Additional Reports - APCM 2021*

Appendix F | *St Mary's Island Full Profile*

Appendix G | *Promoting a Safer Church - House of Bishop's policy statement*

ADDITIONAL LINKS

St Mark's Charity Commission Entry

St Mark’s Gillingham

APPROVAL

This document was approved by the Parochial Church Council of St Mark’s Gillingham at a meeting held on 11th April 2022.

FURTHER INFORMATION

Further information about St Mark’s Gillingham can be found on our website www.stmarksgillingham.org. Any requests for additional information should be addressed to the PCC Secretary, Vicky Allen - vickyalle@gmail.com.